

REMARKS

This is a response to the Office action dated December 16, 2005. Applicant amends the specification and claims 1, 2, 9-12, 18, and 22, and cancels claims 13-14. Claims 1-12 and 15-30 are presented for examination. Applicant requests reexamination and reconsideration of application.

On page 2 of the Office action, the Examiner requests a marked up copy of the specification underlining all new subject matter to show differences between the current specification and the parent application, now US Patent No. 6,442,594. As requested, applicant encloses a marked up copy of the specification.

On pages 2-3 of the Office action, the Examiner requests Figures 1A-1B be designated as prior art. As requested, applicant provides a marked up copy and a replacement drawing sheet for Figures 1A-1B.

On page 3 of the Office action, the Examiner objects to claims 1-30 for informalities. As requested, applicant amends the claims to remove the informalities as follows:

On page 3 of the Office action, the Examiner states claims 1-30 recite a form route manager for receiving and sending email to a route, a step-by-step sequence of email addresses, but this exact limitation appears in claims 1-8 only. A similar limitation appears in claims 9-12 only. Applicant submit claims 1-12 without any change comply with 35 USC 112, but amend claims 1-12 as suggested since it is consistent with the intended meaning.

On page 3 of the Office action, the Examiner states it is unclear what (e.g., the workflow system or form route manager) performs the recited functions of claim 10 and 22. Depending on the level of abstraction it could be either. Applicant amends claims 10 and 22 to indicate at the lower level the form route manager performs each of the functions.

1 On page 4 of the Office action, the Examiner rejects claims 1-30 under 35 USC 112,
2 second paragraph, as being indefinite, making three assertions as follows:

3
4 First, the Examiner states it's unclear what communication medium is used for sending
5 messages between the workflow system including the form route manager and the
6 project management system or the calendar system.

7 If the form route manager is on the server and the project management system or
8 calendar systems are on the client, the communication medium can be generally
9 speaking a computer network (e.g., LAN, WAN or the Internet). If we look at the
10 application layer of the computer network, the communication medium follows client-
11 server principles and permits when relevant exchange of email messages. Page 14 of
12 attached specification lists various email and messaging applications and incorporates
13 by reference Tanenbaum, Computer Network discussion on email. If the form route
14 manager, the project management system, and the calendar systems are server-based
15 the communication medium is messages (e.g., function calls) between the programs.
16 Page 46 of the attached specification mentions MS Outlook and MS Project can use
17 MAPI and Visual Basic to communicate among the systems.

18 Second, the Examiner states it's unclear how the workflow system sets an indicator. In
19 response, applicant amends claim 12 to clarify the form route manager sets the
20 indicator.

21
22 Third, the Examiner states the project segment identifier lacks antecedent basis. In
23 response, applicant amends claim 18 so it depends on claim 17 reciting a project
24 segment identifier.

25 On pages 5-18, the Examiner rejects claims 1-30 under 35 USC 102(b) as being
26 anticipated by "Teach Yourself Microsoft Project 2000 in 24 Hours (Project 2000).

27 However, Project 2000 fails to describe a form route manager with the functions recited
28 in amended claim 1. The Examiner appears to equate MAPI (the messaging application
29 programming interface) and Outlook with a form route manager but MAPI is a protocol
30

1 for email systems and Outlook is usually an email client program used by a workflow
2 user. Further, Project 2000 is intended to assist users of MS Project rather than disclose
3 how MS Exchange works, and it clearly fails to disclose information pertinent to the
4 functions of the form route manager set forth in amended claim 1. There is no mention
5 of step fields or updating them. Project 2000 fails to anticipate or render obvious a form
6 route manager that, among other things, includes the following:

7 an in-box adapted to receive email;

8 a first sequencer adapted to as follows:

9 compare a step field of the email with the route,

10 define the next email address based on the compare,

11 update the email address to the next email address,

12 update the step field to the next step; and

13 an out-box adapted to send email to the next email address.

14
15 In view of the above, amended claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-8 are allowable over
16 Project 2000.

17
18 Amended claim 2 and its dependent claims 2-8 are allowable for similar reasons
19 presented in connection with claim 1.

20
21 Project 2000 fails to anticipate or render obvious claim 9 or claim 10 because it fails to
22 describe a form route manager comparing a step field of the email with the route to
23 determine if the email is at the last step in the route, and if so, deleting the email, and if
24 not, setting the step field in the email to the next step in the route and the email address
25 to the email address of the next step in the route. Instead, Project 2000 returns the
26 email of last recipient to the originator.

27
28 Amended claim 11 is allowable for similar reasons presented in connection with claim 1.
29
30

1 Amended claim 12 is allowable for similar reasons presented in connection with claim 9.

2 Claims 13-14 are canceled.

3
4 Claim 15 and its dependent claims 16-21 are allowable for similar reasons presented in
5 connection with claim 1.

6 Project 2000 fails to anticipate or render obvious claim 22 or its dependent claims 23-30
7 because it fails to describe a form route manager that compares a step field in the
8 message with the route, defines the next computer address based on the compare,
9 updates the computer address to the next computer address in the route, updates the
10 step field to the next step and communicates with the calendar system, wherein the
11 computer address has an indicator defining that a message is to be sent to the calendar
12 system, and the form route manager is adapted to after comparing the step field to the
13 route determine if the indicator is set, and if set, send a message to the calendar
14 system.

15 Please email reply to schedule an interview to discuss this amendment.
16
17

18 Respectfully Submitted,

19 
20 _____

21 Robert Moll

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24

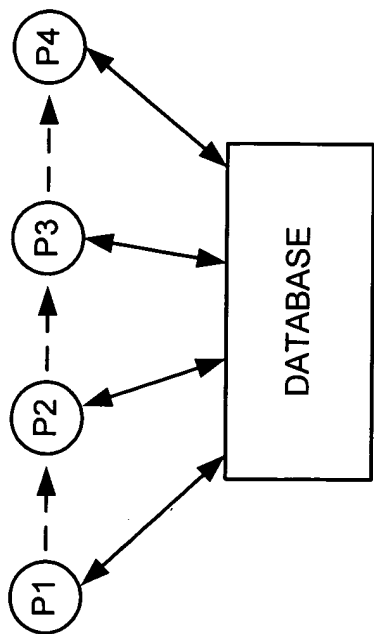
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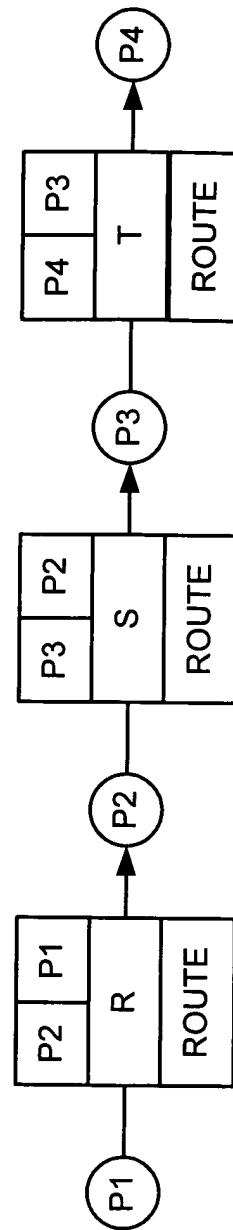


DATABASE WORKFLOW

FIGURE 1A (Prior Art)

TO	FROM
WORKFLOW DOCUMENT	
SIMPLE ROUTE	

EMAIL MESSAGE



ELECTRONIC MAIL WORKFLOW

FIGURE 1B (Prior Art)